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SUBJECT: GERMANY: COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM 2009

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BERLIN 00000009 001.2 OF 003

11. Begin text of report:

German security officials stress that Islamist-inspired terrorism is the greatest threat to German security and they estimate that roughly 185 individuals have undergone paramilitary training over the past ten years at Islamist extremist training centers located primarily in the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Approximately 90 of these individuals have returned to Germany and 15 of them are currently in custody. In 2009, Germany investigated, arrested, and prosecuted numerous terrorism suspects and disrupted terrorist-related groups within its borders with connections to international Islamist, Kurdish nationalist, and Marxist-Leninist terrorist organizations. Two new legislative packages entered into force in 2009 that strengthened Germany's counterterrorism legal framework and provided security officials with new powers of investigation.

Throughout the year, a number of Islamist-inspired terrorist organizations (including the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), al-Qa'ida, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) released a series of videos featuring German speakers who threatened terrorist attacks in Germany or against German interests abroad. In a number of instances, the identities of the individuals appearing in the videos are known and include German-Moroccan dual citizens Bekkay Harrach, Mounir Chouka, and Yassin Chouka. German citizen Eric Breininger, who is believed to be located in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, also appeared in a number of IJU propaganda videos.

During the summer, the frequency of the extremist video and audio messages increased and threatened Germany with attacks if the government did not withdraw its military forces from Afghanistan. Security officials interpreted the videos as an attempt to influence the September 27 national elections. The threats led German police to take heightened security measures at airports, railway stations, and other public sites. On November 13, the Stuttgart district court sentenced an ethnic Turkish man to six months in jail for breach of the peace after he posted one of the extremist videos featuring Bekkay Harrach on YouTube.

On January 1, new legislation went into effect that broadened the powers of the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) in counterterrorism investigations. The law provided the BKA with preventative investigatory powers and gave the BKA lead responsibility in terrorism investigations in which the threat extends across multiple federal states, in which state-level

competence is unclear, or in which state officials request federal assistance.

On August 4, a second legislative package entered into force that made significant amendments to the German Criminal Code and criminalized a range of terrorism-related preparatory actions such as participating in terrorist training or acquiring weapons/bombs with the intent to commit attacks that endanger the German state. The amendments also outlaw the distribution and acquisition of bomb making and similar instruction materials if the intent is to motivate individuals to commit violent crimes. Establishing contact with a terrorist group with the intent of receiving training to commit attacks is also outlawed.

A high profile trial of the four individuals belonging to the IJU cell arrested in Sauerland in 2007 began on April 22. The defendants are charged with membership in a foreign terrorist organization, preparation of a serious criminal offense involving explosives, and other violations. The defendants gave comprehensive testimony that included descriptions of their training at terrorist camps in North Waziristan, Pakistan. The trial is expected to conclude in 2010.

German courts also began trials or reached verdicts in other notable counterterrorism cases:

- On October 13, the Frankfurt Higher Regional Court sentenced Omid Shirkani, a German citizen of Afghan background, to two years and nine months in prison, and co-defendant Huseyin Ozgun, a Turkish citizen, to one year and two months in prison on charges of supporting a foreign terrorist organization (IJU) and violating the Foreign Trade Act. The two participated in terrorism training in Pakistan and supported the IJU with financing and paramilitary equipment.

BERLIN 00000009 002.2 OF 003

- On July 13, the Koblenz Higher Regional Court sentenced Aleem Nasir, a German citizen of Pakistani origin, to eight years imprisonment for membership in a foreign terrorist organization (al-Qa'ida) and multiple counts of violating the Foreign Trade Act. Nasir recruited personnel and provided money and military equipment to al-Qa'ida.

- In July, the Dusseldorf Higher Regional Court found Huseyin Acar, a leading member of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), guilty of being the ring-leader of a criminal organization and of coordinating PKK actions in Germany. The Court sentenced Acar to three years and nine months in prison.

- On August 12, the Frankfurt Higher Regional Court found Aslan Y., a Turkish citizen of Kurdish origin, guilty of membership in a terrorist organization (PKK) and multiple cases of arson, sentencing him to four years imprisonment. Aslan Y. was a PKK leader in southern Germany between 1993 and 1994 and ordered multiple arson attacks on Turkish targets in Germany such as clubs, restaurants and businesses in which one person died.

- On April 8, the Frankfurt Higher Regional Court upheld the 2008 sentencing of Muzaffer Ayata, a Turkish citizen, to three years and six months in prison on charges of being a leader of a criminal organization (PKK).

- On September 14, the Koblenz Higher Regional Court began the trial of Sermet Ilgen, a German citizen, and Vmer Vzdemir, a Turkish citizen, who are charged with membership in a foreign terrorist organization (al-Qa'ida) and violations of the Foreign Trade Act. The two are accused of having participated in terrorist training at camps in Pakistan and to have provided al-Qa'ida with funding and equipment.

- On January 15, the Dusseldorf Higher Regional Court began the trial of five individuals suspected of membership in the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party - Front (DHKP-C), a left-wing terrorist organization that seeks to overthrow the Turkish government and replace it with a Marxist-Leninist regime.

During the year, German law enforcement authorities arrested a number of individuals suspected of involvement in terrorism. Prominent new actions and arrests included:

- The BKA arrested Adnan Vatandas, a Turkish-German man suspected of supporting al-Qa'ida by distributing Internet propaganda and instructions on bomb-making.
- On December 9, prosecutors in Dusseldorf filed charges against Nurhan E., a Turkish woman, for membership in a terrorist organization (DHKP-C).
- On December 15, police arrested Sinan B., a German citizen of Turkish descent, on suspicion of attempted arson, membership in a terrorist organization (DHKP-C) and conspiracy to commit homicide. Sinan B. is alleged to have participated in the firebombings of two Turkish banks in Germany in 1995.

German security officials conducted investigations of a number of individuals and organizations suspected of supporting Islamist-inspired extremist organizations. Prominent investigations in this area include:

- On March 10-11 police and security agencies searched multiple apartments, offices, and premises of associations in Germany (Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Berlin) and Belgium at the request of the Munich Prosecutor's office. The agencies are investigating the activities of ten people who are suspected of having formed a criminal association directed at committing crimes in order to acquire funds to pursue Islamist-inspired political goals.
- The North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) state prosecutor has initiated a criminal investigation on charges of forming a criminal organization, fraud and other crimes against two Islamist organizations with headquarters in NRW: "Milli Gr|s" (IGMG), in Kerpen, and the "Islamic Community Germany" (IGD) in Cologne.
- On July 4, 180 Bremen police officers raided an alleged meeting of European Islamists at the "Family and Culture Association" in

BERLIN 00000009 003.2 OF 003

Bremen-Groepelingen. The Association is headed by Ren Marc Sepac, who is under observation by German domestic intelligence services and suspected of supporting the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) and having contacts with al-Qa'ida.

- On October 7, Berlin police searched 26 apartments during an investigation of a group of alleged Islamists possibly planning terrorist attacks in Russia. Authorities seized computers and other items and investigators found evidence that some individuals associated with the group had left Germany in order to undergo training in extremist camps in Pakistan.

Germany remained a strong advocate of the UNSCR 1267 al-Qa'ida/Taliban financial sanctions regime and proposed a number of individuals to the committee for designation.

The German government continued its outreach and engagement with Muslim communities to promote integration and tolerance. The Ministry of Interior continued the German Islam Conference initiative that it began in 2006 and held a plenary meeting in June that released a new study entitled "Muslim Life in Germany." The conference is made up of several working groups that meet on a regular basis to discuss issues relevant to Muslims living in Germany such as education, religious instruction, separation of religion and state, mosque construction, and strengthening relations between Muslim communities and the media and business sectors. One forum within the Conference focuses on improving cooperation between security authorities and the Muslim community in order to address radicalization and extremism.

Implementation discussions continued regarding a bilateral U.S.-German agreement to strengthen fingerprint and DNA information sharing to combat terrorism and serious crime. The U.S. Embassy's

Law Enforcement Working Group continued its ongoing engagement with state-level law enforcement contacts by organizing four security conferences throughout Germany in which the topic of Islamist terrorism featured prominently.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Ministry of Interior continued their strategic dialogue and held a Deputies-chaired conference in June to strengthen cooperation across a range of counterterrorism-related issues. Germany participated in the DHS Customs and Border Protection's Container Security Initiative in the ports of Hamburg and Bremerhaven and supported DHS Customs and Border Protection's Immigration Advisory Program operating at the Frankfurt Airport. The DHS Transportation Security Administration's presence in Frankfurt, together with U.S. and German air marshals, formed key parts of bilateral efforts to provide air transport security for the seven German airports with flights to the United States.

As a country participating in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), Germany continued to comply with requirements in the VWP law related to information sharing and other law enforcement and counterterrorism cooperation. This cooperation was further enhanced by the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007.

End text of report.

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